WILSHIRE'S

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Upton Sinclair Against the One-Leg Dance

UPTON SINCLAIR is always protesting against a man's living his own life. How many of us would still be quietly masticating our analine-dyed Chicago sausages if the "Jungle" had not interfered with our contentment?

In his new novel, "Sylvia," we get another warning from Upton. It is not pig flesh now, but upon human, that he dwells. The purchase of human flesh, particularly of the female sex, whether for life outright or for a short time, brings us into greater dangers than any flesh that he ever found lurking in a Chicago packing-house.

Reginald Wright Kauffman is also backing up Upton, or Upton is backing up Reginald, whichever way you like to put it, in this awakening of the world to the realisation that the daughters of joy are anything either to themselves or their patrons rather than what their name might indicate. What they may be to their owners is apparently a question of percentage. Reginald calls his book the "Sentence of Silence," and he lets us know that he has only lifted the corner of the curtain this time. When he writes his next one and shows us what's what, and then when Upton also comes along with his next, which, I understand, has 606 pages, we may look for the world to become so virtuous that John D. Rockefeller, Junr., will disband his Vice Commission.

Meanwhile, the only ray of comfort that has fallen on all this dark path of vice is from English Walling, who, in his "Larger Aspects of Socialism," assures us that this fuss being raised by Sinclair and Kauffman comes from heated imaginations rather than from any first-hand scientific knowledge of the matter. I join with Walling in giving them the benefit of the doubt.

However, there is reported to be 40,000 new victims every year in London alone, and there is to be a Royal Commission appointed. Then we may know who is right, anyway, upon the subject. Pending accurate information the world will no doubt wag as formerly, also afterwards. So what's the use?

But all the foregoing is not to the point. I should not have published such an extremely diverting preface to what I fear is rather a dull discussion. Upton Sinclair writes me the following letter:—

Letchworth, England, August 9.

My Dear Wilshire,—I see by the New York papers that the Paterson strikers have had to acknowledge defeat, and go back to work. Here was a practically unanimous strike of 25,000 silk workers; they tied up a whole industry, and they have got nothing save the blacklisting of 2,000 of the more active of them. I was in the United States and saw something of this strike. It was lost because all the powers of government were on the side of the owners; because the police suspended the Constitution and the courts abolished the laws, and men were sent to jail in batches for simple picketing. Now some of us fool Socialists are going to persuade the 23,000 strikers who are left to vote out the owners' Government, and vote themselves into control of the police.

I wonder what you are going to say about it? The usual blind anti-political stuff? I see the Spanish Government has declared the workers' organisation in Barcelona an illegal one. They almost did that in Paterson; they were ready to do it in the Rand. How a man as sensible as you can propose to throw over all the rights that we have gained through a thousand years of struggle, I can't understand. All that I can say is that if you succeed in persuading the working class to give up the government to their enemies, it will take them another thousand years to win their rights. The capitalists have not yet begun to show their hand—there is no limit to what they would do, to what they *will* do, if only you and the rest of the pure-and-simple industrialists can free them from the fear of working-class *votes*. They will jail every leader, raid every office, confiscate every paper, attach every dollar of funds, and break every strike—and all they want as preliminary to the doing of it is to have you succeed in persuading the working class to give up politics.

Now, of course, you'll turn this round to mean that I want pure-and-simple Parliamentarism—that I'm defending Ramsay MacDonald. That's the way the argument is kept going to the great pleasure of our enemies. Why not for once discuss the real question—the advantage of walking on both legs instead of on either one?—Yours for the ballot *and* the strike,

UPTON SINCLAIR.

My heading referred to the One-Leg Dance. Rather far-fetched, I admit, for Upton's sedate and modest reference to walking, not dancing, on two legs. Probably made you look for Upton's ideas on The Tango? I am sure you would have been more interested in that than in his ideas on voting, or mine either. The heading was merely illegitimate bait to gain your attention to something that otherwise you might have missed.

Upton says: "If you succeed in persuading the working class to give up the Government to their enemies." By this he means to say, no doubt, that he fears I will convince them that they will never get the "government" by mearely voting aye for it. Of course, Upton really can't mean that I could persuade them to give up something they have never had—the government.

Now let me explain once again. I say by all means let the workers get whatever they can get by voting. If they can get control of Paterson, or any other place, by voting they would be fools not to vote. But the point I am trying to drive in is this. That even in case they do elect a Mayor of Paterson, as they did of Haledon, the adjoining small town, they would be eternally fooled if they would expect then to be

safe, inaugurate a strike, and think by having the police in their hands they would win hands down.

In the first place, it would be no time at all before the State of New Jersey would take the police power out of the hands of Paterson and vest it in the State. We have seen this happen before with the Ripper Bill in Pennsylvania, and in the Ohio when the police power was taken from Mayor Jones, of Toledo, and placed in a State Commission.

Does Upton forget how quickly the Socialist sheriffs were kicked out in Colorado and West Virginia when the State troops went into the strike districts?

It can't be possible that, in the light of Upton's declaring that "there is no limit to what the capitalists will do," he thinks they won't again do what they have already done. I agree there is no limit.

Now Upton is confessedly a Revolutionist, a Utopian: a man who wants Socialism and wants it now. He is not "a fool Socialist persuading the workers to vote themselves into control of the police" merely to get such control, but in order to use that control to get nearer Socialism.

Now I ask Upton if he knows that getting the control of the local police will be a most evanescent affair. That is, the control will only be held until the situation becomes so strained that the State takes away that control to itself. I say if Upton admits this, then I ask him would he dare go before the late strikers of Paterson and say: "Well, boys, the thing to do is to vote yourselves into control. True you won't be in control long even you do get a majority, but you will have the satisfaction of making them take away your present nominal political power. You will have made them show their hands"?

If he would so dare, the Political Committee of the Socialist Party would not dare let him go on their platform. They would never get any votes. The position taken by the Socialist Party leaders is a false one. They are either ignorant and don't know that they are asking their people to vote for power which will never be given them, or they are too cowardly to frankly admit that the voting is of no practical consequence, and that the only value of politics lies in the chance for the revolutionary propaganda it affords.

But, as I have before explained, the programme of "politics for propaganda only" is merely a programme fit for the Party when there is no chance of success. The moment Socialists are successful and elect their men, then they are immediately irresistibly thrown into the dirty game of politics, and all the early enthusiasm which fired the best of their leaders inevitably vanishes. The Party then becomes at best merely "progressive."

It's a case of be damned if you don't elect, and be damned if you do. Upton's fundamental mistake is in thinking that the power of the capitalists arises from their control of the Government. It arises from their control of capital.

When the workers through their industrial solidarity control Capital, then that very same hour they will control the Government. The "rights gained through a thousand years' struggle" were not rights as men, but rights as Capitalists. The men who control the bank vaults are the men who control the ballot boxes. It's dollars, not men, that count, and dollars mean economic power.

Economic power is what the workers need.

How to Bring about the Social Revolution

HOW to bring about Socialism is certainly the question of questions for Socialists. No matter how much we may allow that certain reforms are good, yet we all insist that no reform can be of much good compared with the great good involved in the total abolition of the wage system and exploitation.

The *Christian Commonwealth* of London, a journal much more revolutionary than its title might indicate, recently conducted a symposium upon "How to Bring About the Social Revolution." Among many others who contributed was myself, and here is what I said in their issue of June 25 last:—

To bring about the revolution involves the expropriation of the capitalist class by the working class for the benefit of society as a whole. The first thing on the programme is to develop within the workers as a class the desire to accomplish this expropriation, for at present no such desire exists. To develop this desire it is necessary that the power to satisfy the desire shall be called into being. To-day there is practically neither desire nor power. Both must have a simultaneous development, and there must be not only consciousness of power, coupled with a desire to expropriate, but a consciousness of the ability properly to utilise and operate the capital to be expropriated. Any desire which may arise prior to the ability to take and use after having taken is sterile.

The capitalists to-day hold possession of property apparently by virtue of their command of the State. I say apparently, for the view is an inverted one. As a matter of fact, the capitalists command the State owing to their possession of property. It is due to the Socialists and Anarchists having the inverted view instead of the true one that both direct their attention to either capturing or destroying the State, erroneously thinking they will thus be able to expropriate the capitalists. But the true way to expropriate the capitalists is by direct action. Going after the State is as futile a performance as that of the dog on the bridge going after the reflection in the water.

THE METHOD OF DIRECT EXPROPRIATING

is by the strike. The organisation which gives power to win the strike is the organisation which at the same time will give the workers that consciousness of power for a general expropriation of the capitalists by means of the general strike. Business both financial and industrial is ever concentrating in larger and larger masses. The old-time craft unions are inadequate to meet the modern developments of capital. To meet massed capital we must have massed labour. Modern automatic machinery is displacing skilled workers and throwing them into the ranks of ordinary labour. All this makes, in the end, for the solidarity of labour. It means that the trade unions of the future are to be formed upon industrial lines rather than upon craft lines. We see, for instance, the workers on the railways are now uniting as railway workers and not as engineers, pointsmen, etc.

Industrial Unionism, when it further develops a knowledge of its own powers and realises its possibilities, will finally become Revolutionary Industrial Unionism or Syndicalism. That is, the workers will first organise to control the product, and their success in such control will lead them to look beyond a mere

bettering of wages to the absolute expropriation of the capitalists, and to the complete abolition of the wage system itself.

No one questions that with sufficient solidarity the trade unions have the power to stop the wheels of industry and practically to force any terms they choose upon the capitalists. In no other manner than by economic solidarity can this power of Labour be developed. Obviously political solidarity gives no power to the workers. At best voting is merely an indication of what they want. This present discussion is not to consider what the workers want, but how they are to get what they want.

A SUCCESSION OF WIDESPREAD STRIKES

will develop solidarity and self-consciousness among the workers such as no other activity can possibly accomplish. With the self-confidence developed by economic solidarity there will not only come the desire for a social revolution, but the confidence that labour has the power within itself to bring it about. What is also most essential will also come into being—namely, the consciousness that Labour can operate and manage the industries involved without the aid of the capitalists. To-day this consciousness does not exist; on the contrary, the workers feel—and feel rightly, too, considering their present state of development—that even if the industries were turned over to them, they would lack the technical knowledge to operate them without help from the capitalists. This deficiency must be remedied, and it can only be remedied by the development of Revolutionary Unionism.

Direct Action or Syndicalism is not an attempt at making a short cut to the Revolution. On the contrary, it is evolving as a theory of action simply because Syndicalists realise that there is no royal road to the Social Revolution. It is absurd to think, as do the Parliamentarians, that the capitalists will stand still and voluntarily allow their property to be voted out of their hands by a Parliament having Single-tax views or Socialist views. The only thing to which capitalists will ever surrender is superior force, and the only way for the workers to develop this force is by developing sufficient class solidarity to

CONTROL THE NATION'S ARTERIAL INDUSTRIES.

Then when the day for revolution comes there most probably will be no necessity for a general strike, merely because the capitalists will surrender to the obviousness of the workers having the power to gain the victory.

Property in the future must be owned by the community, but its control must lie with the various organisations of the workers. That is, any economic rent that may arise from the nature of the industry shall fall, not to the particular workers within that industry, but shall go to the community as a whole. On the other hand, the workers, by virtue of the power of their economic organisations—which will not surrender their existence after the revolution—will always be able to determine for themselves the conditions of their labour in terms of equity.

However, the particular kind of organisation under which the society of the future will function is not worth debating about compared with the dissemination of the theory that industrial organisation will alone give Labour the power to accomplish the Social Revolution. The question is one of methods more than ideals. The general strike is a weapon that may never be used after being forged, but the discipline and education involved in the forging of it is an absolute necessity to the triumph of Labour.

In continuation of this symposium the *Christian Commonwealth* printed the following on July 30:—

In answer to the correspondent who asked how the Syndicalists propose to provide for the workers while they are wageless and, consequently, foodless during a general strike, Mr. Gaylord Wilshire, whose article in our issue of June 25 certainly stimulated discussion, writes:—

"Your correspondent evidently has a picture in his mind's eye of the workers folding their arms and matching their ability to go without food against the rich, who will always manage to get food for a period somehow or other, strike or no strike. With unlimited time for the starving match, of course, the poor man running short of food first would certainly starve first, and therefore the result would be a foregone victory for the rich. But the general strike does not mean such a simple method of wholesale suicide by the working class. The essence of the theory is that, inasmuch as society is an organism, any refusal to function by a vital part of the organism means death to the whole. Let a man's lungs become inflamed and refuse to function, and the man himself will surely die, and he knows it. Therefore a man with pneumonia will sacrifice practically everything to restore his lungs to health. For the workers to win it is necessary for them to be intelligent enough to stop work at vital points in such a way that they will greatly interfere with the working of the whole social organism, and at the same time injure themselves so little that the pain they receive will not discourage them from continuing the strike.

"Suppose the railway workers and the miners become so highly organised and intelligent in their action that they should to a man stop work for, say, two days and then go back to work for a week, then strike again for a couple of days, or three days, or a fortnight, as they might decide. This would be most efficacious in creating disturbance to society with little discomfort to the men. Such a course would not involve any starvation, for they would always be returning to work when funds ran low, and inasmuch as we premise they are well united and organised, there would therefore be no danger of outsiders being employed to take the places, nor would the employers dare institute a lock-out against such a large and powerful group of men controlling two vital industries.

"The power of the capitalist class to-day does not rest upon bayonets, but upon the lack of class-consciousness of the workers. Upon this point I think all are more or less agreed, but whereas the Parliamentarians think that class-consciousness may be aroused by political action, the Syndicalists say that nothing but Revolutionary Unionism will develop it. It is the old song over again: 'Mother, may I go out to swim?' 'Oh, yes, my darling daughter, hang your clothes upon a hickory limb, but don't go near the water.' You can't teach swimming by text-books any more than you can teach revolutionary action. Both are the result of physical practice, not intellectual gymnastics. A man will never learn to swim in the revolutionary sea by sitting in the gallery watching Ramsay MacDonald make a speech in the House of Commons."

The Highway of Error

IT is when an intelligent inquirer after truth puts searching questions to you on your philosophy of Syndicalism that you realise how far apart basically Syndicalism is from Socialism. I feel, however, that we really require a re-defining of Socialism. I find myself constantly using the word (1) to mean a nebulous Future State where economic equality has been established on an indefinable plan, but equally agreeable to both Socialists and Syndicalists; (2) to mean a Future State of society wherein the Democratic State is the sole owner of industry, where the ordinary ideal as presented by the Parliamentarian Socialists has at last been realised; (3) to mean not the end, but the means of getting our future ideal society—viz., through voting for the Socialist Party.

It is in the first sense that I used the word when I said that "both Socialists and Syndicalists are out for Socialism," and to which Mr. Pearson refers to in the following interesting letter:—

Hindhead, England.

Dear Mr. Wilshire,—Now to explain my little difficulties. In your April number, which I liked so much that I distributed and redistributed all my copies until now I have not one left to refer to, you said something like this in your reply to someone: "We are both out for Socialism. It is the method of getting there that we differ about. So-and-So says, 'Do it by converting the majority, by propaganda.' I say, 'So-and-So's an ass' (or if you did not say that you probably thought it). 'Do it by educating and organising the more intellectual minority of workers up to well-planned direct action.'" This is probably rather an inaccurate version, but I remember being very interested by your saying, "We both want Socialism"; and I suppose that your idea of Socialism would be joint ownership by the people, *but with ownership in groups*, the workers of each industry owning the industry that they work. But these different industries would each have to submit to partial control by their fellow-industries, through the medium of your central elected body; and this partial outside control of each would, amongst other things, have some say as to what prices the various industries would be allowed to charge the rest of the community for their goods or services. Thus partial control means partial ownership. If the community can dictate through its central body at what price the millers must grind our corn for us, that is equivalent to ownership by the community. But as the community will only have a *share* of the control of price, that is equivalent to *part*-ownership.

So that the crowd of organised workers that the Syndicalist central body is ultimately elected from is the same as the crowd of State workers that the Socialist chamber or chambers are elected from. In both cases it is the whole adult population; and the chief difference that I can see is, that under Syndicalism elections go according to trade, instead of haphazard and merely according to number as in Socialism. And another difference is that, whatever you do you must not forget yourself so far as to call the total organisation of the Syndicalist crowd a "State." Perhaps we shall be called "The Syndicalist Crowd of Great Britain and Ireland," or "The Syndicalist Association of Great Britain and Ireland."

I understand that the use of the word "State" will be restricted to barbarous countries! However, the matter of elections according to trade rather than haphazard merely according to number does seem to me more sensible. Then page 8 of your May number—"The Syndicalist Ideal." "One difference between the Syndicalist's ideal and that of the Socialist's is——," etc. This I cannot agree to. I think they both want equality in participation of both production and product. The rest of this article seems to me as much an argument for Socialism as for Syndicalism, and makes me think there is not very much difference.

The next article in the corner of same page amused both my partner and myself; likewise page 5—"John Spargo says Syndicalism is a vain Dream"—etc. Likewise Berger's Mutual Aid Bonds (in April, I believe). June I can skip. It interested me very much, but there are no questions I wish to ask.

July, page 8, 3rd par.: "The whole tendency of modern industry is toward larger and larger units." Then why not as big a unit as possible? Joint stock of all industries in as big an area as possible?

It seems to me that Syndicalism is only a good development of Socialism, *but* with a method of getting there attached to it which the original Socialism never had. If this is so, it would seem to me that although we ought to recognise and to be very grateful for the great good that the Syndicalist movement has done and is doing, yet we may say justly that it would have done quicker and more good if it had proclaimed itself as a development (and a very great one) of Socialism, and had not taken for itself quite a different name and caused unnecessary dissension in the ranks of the rebels.

Page 5. G. R. S. Taylor, foot of column. "It is hard to see why," etc. My reply would be, that State Collectivists have no more and no less confidence in the officials elected by their scheme than the Syndicalists have in theirs. Both require officials.

You can judge nothing against State Socialism by present-day State Government. You *can* judge that huge differences of the economic power of individuals and parties carry with them huge differences of political power—and corruption. And you can also judge that the old-fashioned Socialists' *method* of obtaining the revolution is wrong.—With very kind regards, yours sincerely,

R. MEYNELL PEARSON.

The psychological chasm between Syndicalist and Socialist lies in the answer to the question, "Do we act because we think, or do we think because we act?" The man of reason, the Socialist, will say: of course we think before we act. The man of instinct, the Syndicalist, will say, on the contrary, we think because we act.

This difference in theory explains why the Socialist calls on men to think and vote while the Syndicalist relies upon their acting, striking first and thinking afterwards. The Socialist would educate by books, while the Syndicalist, following Signora Montesori, would educate by activity. The Socialist says the brain educates the hand, while the Syndicalist says the hand educates the brain.

The Syndicalist says if you would learn how to swim you must drop your text book and go in the water.

Mr. Pearson quite mistakes the Syndicalist position when he says that I suggest "educating the workers *up to* direct action"; not at all, the thing is to educate them not "up to," but "by" direct action. Education comes by and after the direct action, not before.

Then, too, he is worrying over the difference in meaning between the words "control" and "ownership," when, as a matter of fact, they are synonymous from the Syndicalist standpoint. Walter Lippman, in the *New Review*, has the same worry about the I.W.W. and Odon Por declaring for the mines for the miners and the railways for the railwaymen.

From the Socialist standpoint there is a great difference between a future society in which the community owns the railways and one where the railwaymen own them. Since State Socialism does not imply any organisation among railwaymen, ownership by the State will obviously make it all powerful as against the men. Socialists assume the State will be just, that with industrial democracy we must necessarily expect as a corollary a benevolent industrialism. But the Syndicalist declares that there must be guarantees, and that the only guarantee of the power of the individuals to resist the State is the organisation of Industrial Unions.

Under a Syndicalist society the theory of justice to the individual will be the same as the theory held by the Socialist, but the great difference is that under Syndicalism the individual will be able to enforce his meed of justice if it be not given him voluntarily. Therefore, under Syndicalism it is a matter of indifference to the individual whether the railways are to be owned by the community and controlled by the railwaymen, or whether the railways are to be owned by the railwaymen and controlled by the community, for it will amount to exactly the same thing to him in either event.

The railwaymen will, under Syndicalism, through their unions, be in a position to demand fair treatment, and that is all they will, in theory at any rate, ever demand. If they should ever happen to demand more than is justly due them, then the Central Body, to which Mr. Pearson refers, will argue the point with them and endeavour to show them that anything they take in excess of what is just simply diminishes to that extent the share which should fall to the workers in other industries. I think there will be no trouble in arriving at an amicable conclusion to any such disputes. The difficulty to-day in settling industrial disputes affords us no criterion, inasmuch as the whole theory of the wage system admittedly is based on injustice. The basic plan is for the employers to give the workers just as little as they can compel them to take. The workers of to-day also know that whatever they may gain by striking for higher wages does not come out of the other workers, but out of the capitalists.

Another point that the Syndicalists enlarge upon, and Mr. Pearson unduly minimises, is the importance of elections going by trades rather than by territories. The point is, that the cells of an organ know better than any cells outside the organ can know what is best for the organ.

If I have a cinder in my eye, the cells in the eye call a mass meeting and insist upon its expulsion. The cells in my right thumb may be quite indifferent to the complaint of my eye cells. Possibly if there were a referendum called of all the cells in the body upon the question of ejecting that cinder, the eye cells might be voted down by a heavy majority. But that is not the way Nature goes about things. The only voters called into action are the eye cells, and they make more racket than a bunch of Suffragettes after a Cabinet Minister. The eye cells don't care anything about majority rule, but defiantly declare that they will hold up the whole body until their grievance is attended to. Like the English Suffragettes who declare that they don't care whether there is a majority for or against suffrage, they are going to fuss till they get it. Quite right they are, too! The conscious minority of eye cells can always bring around the unconscious majority of the rest of the body cells to their way of thinking once they are inflamed enough to think it worth while to make a kick.

In a perfect society not only is electing by unions "more sensible," as Mr. Pearson admits, but it is an absolute necessity.

As to Socialists having the same lack of confidence as Syndicalists in officials as they are elected to-day, whether they be Socialist officials or others, I would say that the Socialist viewpoint of officials is such that Socialists must necessarily have more confidence in officials than Syndicalists, as otherwise their whole scheme of Socialism falls to the ground.

The essence of Socialism is to choose your leaders and experts and trust them to run the Earth for you. The essence of Syndicalism is to educate yourself so that you can run the machine yourself.

The Socialist Party must necessarily develop a tradition that the Victor Bergers and the Ramsay MacDonalds are heaven-sent. If they do not develop a reverence for leaders they cannot progress, therefore it is imperative that they should do so, and they do. True, there are some who may question the divinity of certain popular leaders, but it is merely because they reverence different priests.

Syndicalism applies the dictum of a sound mind in a sound body not only to man as an individual, but also to man in the mass. We must educate all men socially, physically, and mentally: educate them to know themselves and to know each other, and to do this we must in them develop a mass thought by mass activities.

It is a tradition that the professor of political economy of the University knows about as little of the real economics of industry as a wooden Indian. Why? Simply because he is removed from the current of life. He has relied upon books rather than men to gain his views. It is likewise just as impossible for the Socialist Parliamentarians to gain a true knowledge of labour conditions by standing on a street-corner and expounding Marx to the passers-by as it is for the college professor to gain it by talking to his students.

It is simply impossible for a man to remain a Parliamentarian Socialist and at the same time be involved continually in a series of labour strikes and trouble. No matter what his theories may have been before he went into the fights, he is bound to come out a Syndicalist. In proof of this, the examples of Haywood and Tom Mann are significant. The logic of events, not the reading of books, compels men to become Syndicalists.

Finally, I would say that because a man is a Syndicalist, and acts on Syndicalist lines, is by no means a sign that he is pursuing the right course for the time being. Generally speaking, he should certainly be right, but inasmuch as admittedly he acts on instinct rather than reason he is bound to be often wrong—at least, to appear to be so. No doubt both Mann and Haywood back many mistaken strikes, and no doubt they would be the last to claim infallibility. But, on the other hand, it is much better to occasionally lose your way when on the right track than to never lose your way when on the broad Parliamentary highway of error.

The Book that Won the Prize

"Socialism." By O. D. Skelton. Constable, London. 6s. net.

This is a book brought forth by a series of prizes for economic essays offered by the American clothing firm of Hart, Schaffner and Marx. It is the sixth in the series, and is tabulated as "The Case Against Socialism," but I note that it is published under the title of "Socialism; a Critical Analysis." Presumably the sponsors considered a critical analysis of Socialism would be equivalent to presenting a case against it.

While the book is confessedly written against Socialism, it is a first-rate compendium of the subject, and does the author great credit for a painstaking and thoroughly good production. I don't know of any book which gives a more faithful account of the history of Socialism and of the men connected with it, and the very fact that it is not written by a Socialist makes its points in favour of Socialism all the stronger.

The bibliography is especially good.

The American publishers are Houghton, Mifflin and Co.

That Rand Provisional Government

THE interesting thing about the late strike on the Rand was not the fact that the strikers surrendered at the very time when solidarity would have put the country at their mercy, nor that Lord Gladstone shot them down like sheep when he had them at his mercy. All that sort of thing has happened often before, and will often happen again. The new thing about the strike was that the strikers had a vision of what they would do if they should win, which included more than the winning of a few paltry concessions. Concessions good enough no doubt in their way, reasonable concessions that would no doubt reduce the fearful tuberculosis death rate, so that among the Rand miners it would not be more than, say, three times the normal rate in other countries.

The strikers looked beyond the wringing of concessions, and dared to visualise a victory that would give them entire freedom from the Wernher-Beit-Eckstein plutocracy.

No wonder Lord Gladstone thought it was time for machine guns.

True enough the strikers failed, but nothing was more significant than that they had such a daring vision.

To say that their plan was chimerical is not to the point. All aiming at stars is chimerical to the blind.

Lord Gladstone indicated what he thought about the idea when, in his official cable report explaining why he ordered the shooting, he said in extenuation that the strikers had actually drawn up a plan for a Provisional Government to be put into force if they had succeeded.

Quite time for bullets, thought Gladstone, and I quite agree. When the workers organising a general strike have in view a Workers' Provisional Government to assume the reins of power when the strike shall succeed it is up to the plutocracy to play their last ace—the bullet.

But in the game of Syndicalism, although the capitalists hold the high cards, the guns, the workers hold the trumps, their labour. A small trump may capture a big ace.

Nuts—But No Coon

THERE has been a lot of talk about the slump in Socialism. Recently, at the annual meeting of the Fabian Society in London, Mr. C. K. Ensor said that Socialism had gone back more in the past year than it had gone ahead in the last five. If we are to consider merely the political Socialist movement there is much truth in what he said, but the fact that the political part of the Socialist movement is losing may be merely a mark of greater education on the part of the Socialists if the Syndicalists are right in their contention that Socialism cannot be brought about by proletarian voters storming the ballot-box.

Any dog is liable to occasionally bark up the wrong tree, but if he continue barking up the wrong tree too long we regard him a fool. I myself did some barking up the wrong tree for a while, but I must say that my bark was more to call attention to the fact that there was a coon up some tree than that it was necessarily up my particular tree and no other tree.

In other words, I was out for politics for propaganda only, as we said in those days. But we are now not allowed to say this, for Section 6 of the Constitution of the Socialist Party restricts us to "practical politics."

However, when we send a tiger-cat Hillquit up our political tree, and the fall elections have caused the leaves to drop so we can plainly see him exploring in vain all the branches for the capitalist coon, it seems to me that it is about time for us to cease hypnotising ourselves thinking there is a coon there. There may be reform nuts on that tree, but certainly no revolutionary coon, and we are after coons not nuts.

Debs's Report of Hatfield

Of course Debs made a mistake in whitewashing Governor Hatfield in his report on the West Virginia strike—in fact, Debs has since acknowledged his error—but to say that he erred consciously is ridiculous.

Debs has been too long honourably identified with the Socialist movement to be thought guilty of anything more than an unfortunate mistake due to his carelessness in not comparing dates with events. If he had done so he would have seen that Hatfield was guilty of about all the arbitrary acts of a Czar of Russia without the excuse of being the hereditary autocrat of all the Virginias.

As for Berger's joining in with Debs in the whitewashing job—well, nobody nowadays expects too much of Berger anyway. Nobody that knows.

Berger, warming up in the sun of Washington politics, discovered that old Joe Cannon was not such a bad fellow after all. Probably not.

Death of August Bebel

ALTHOUGH for the last few years Bebel had taken no active part in the Party management in Germany owing to his ill-health, nevertheless his death will prove to be a great disintegrating force for the German Party. As a matter of fact, the Party is not nearly as solid as appearances indicate, and a shock such as the death of its great leader will have a much more serious effect upon it than if it were based upon more solid foundations. Syndicalism has not as yet made any great dent in German Parliamentarianism, but this not because there is not a fertile soil for it there, but merely because the psychological hour for it to arrive has not yet struck. When it does come, then will the great Party which Bebel formed become split in twain over night, half going to the Opportunists and half to the Syndicalists. The day is not distant either.

The Audacity of Parliamentarianism

"Syndicalism." By John Spargo. H. B. Huebsch, New York. $1.25 net.

SPARGO'S book, considering it is so obviously the work of an unsympathetic pot-boiler, is not half as bad as it might be.

He regards Syndicalism as a parasite on political Socialism, and admittedly it is hard to be enthusiastic about a parasite especially when you think you yourself are the host. And if Spargo be right, he certainly is the host, for if there be a pure specimen of the politicus socialimus it is Spargo.

However, I doubt if Syndicalism is a parasite on Socialism. I am rather inclined to think it may be the other way about.

True enough just now when there is a strike the strikers are often in receipt of funds from the Socialist Party, but strikers are not necessarily Syndicalists. The Socialist Party has money in its treasury, and it is the only organisation that

is urged to give both by its sympathy and its policy. If there were no strikers there would be no Socialist Party; the more strikes the more members, and the more members the more money in the Party treasury.

This has been the rule in the past, but that it will be the rule in the future remains to be seen. There certainly have been enough strikes in the past year, but notwithstanding the strikes the dues paying membership of the Party has fallen off over one-third—viz., from about 125,000 to less than 75,000. If this keeps up it will soon afford small pickings for Syndicalist parasites, and in the ordinary course of human events both parasite and host will be committed to a common grave dying of inanition. But Syndicalism is no parasite on Socialism. Syndicalism is rather the legitimate child of capitalism, and as it grows to maturity will inherit the earth rather than usurping illegitimate Socialism.

The true parasites on the revolutionary movement are those men who have the places of profit and honour in the Socialist Party, men who if it had not been for Socialism would never have had the ability to make the place in the sun which they now occupy to their own comfort and delight.

We all know hundreds of men in the Socialist movement who have all the attributes of the true parasite. They have abandoned their customary mode of work, and compared with the standard of life prevailing among the working class, from which they sprung, they live a life of ease and luxury.

Whatever may be said of Syndicalism there can be no question but that, purely from the material standpoint, its leaders have not benefited by its advocacy.

When Spargo talks about "a degree of audacity and daring that is almost sublime" being essential for the "Socialist in politics," and when one visualises the daring sublimated in heroes like the gallant Victor Berger, it is to smile.

Can there be a Genuine Revolutionary Political Party?

By REV. ROLAND D. SAWYER.

IT is the claim of the Socialist Political Party the world over that it is a revolutionary party. Other political parties are scoffed out of court as being mere reform parties, the Socialist Party is for the revolution. For five years I swallowed this, preached it—but now it at last dawns upon me that there can be no such thing as a revolutionary political party. To amount to anything a political party must secure political power; this political power can be secured only by causing a plurality or sometimes majority of the voters to support your theory.

The right to franchise is so manipulated that you might have three-fourths the people with you, but not a plurality of the voters. Now, frankly, is it a possibility for a revolutionary group with limited means and a small press, is it psychologically possible to convert in the limited time at your disposal a majority of the voters in the face of education and appeals against you by unlimited means and educational and propaganda means? I believe not. In this country it has been found impossible, and the men who get elected to power, like Berger, Lunn, et al, have had to abandon revolutionary policies and become frankly opportunist reformers, no better, no worse, than La Follette, Wilson, Kern, Sulzer, and the rest. But, again, suppose by a sudden upheaval of public sentiment like a strike, there should be seated a delegation of revolutionary members in any Parliamentary body, could they avail anything for a revolution? No. Parliaments are the places of compromise, dickering, trades—such a group might aid in reforms, but they would have no revolutionary power. Again, in America there are constitutions over-lapping terms of the Parliaments and the like, and, above all, the veto power of the courts, that would make impossible any revolutionary action in any city, state or the nation, even if a majority of the voters arose and voted for Socialism.

I still believe we can accomplish many reforms for the workers by means of elected men; I shall continue to vote, to take part in politics, but I do this with my mind disabused of the thought that I can bring about a revolution by my vote. I vote for reforms not for revolution. Those who spurn reforms and want revolution must cease to vote, and throw their activities into the revolutionary unions; but those who want reforms, or are willing to accept them, can do much through voting; but no one has any right to tell intelligent men that he is a member of a revolutionary political party—revolutions do not come, cannot come, through political parties.

NOTE: Mr. Sawyer was recently "removed" from the Executive of the Massachusetts Socialist Party for his Syndicalism.

The Servile State

George D. Herron, in *The Metropolitan.*

IF I mistake not, the most immediate and critical issue before the Socialist movement is its relation to what is known as the State. Decision and definition are here imperative. The attitude of the Socialist toward governmental institutions must be made clear to the world; and the Socialist must be made clear about it in his own mind. For, first amid outer and seeming sympathisers with the Socialistic movement, then in that broad fringe of indefinite reformistic sentiment that borders and cumbers the movement, there is the crude and corrupting conception of Socialism as proceeding through a mere extension of the functions of the present political State. Even among Socialists, there too largely prevails the notion that a governmental direction of industry is the goal of the Socialist conquest of political power. It is indeed appalling to read the monstrous misconceptions of certain recent Socialist writers—writers who are desperately concerned that the Socialist movement should be clothed in the faded and shabby garment of a decadent Puritan gentility, and who seem far more fearful of freedom than of the varied yokes of capitalism; who tremblingly hasten to assure the world that Socialism does not really mean freedom at all, but a universal compulsory self-denial, a universal barracks, a universal industral conscription, with New England custodians set over society's morals, and a pale and emasculated neo-Catholicism for society's ultimate religion. And in movements where the Socialism is not sincere or fundamental, where it consists of but little more than a mixture of middle-class measures and banalties—as in the Labour Parties of England and Australia—a place is given to the State that was never contemplated by the Socialist pioneers or their philosophy. It is a faithless and malific influence that impinges the Socialist hope solely upon the conquest and transformation of existing political institutions. Nothing can be more mischievous to the movement; nothing can more surely misinterpret the Socialist fathers; nothing can be more contrary to the genius and the prospect of the revolution.

The Powers of the State

Now the mere expansion of the powers and functions of the State over commerce and industry is not Socialism. Indeed, it may be quite the reverse. It may be merely the further unfoldment of effectual capitalism. Government ownership of this or that common utility, even the extension of government over the whole field of industry, need not have anything to do with Socialism—except to hinder or postpone its coming. We ignorantly speak of the postal system, for instance, as a step towards Socialism. Yet in this, our pretended republic, the postal system is increasingly the bureaucratic and irresponsible servant of a despotic capitalism. It may be used to establish a lawless espionage over the private correspondence of individuals, and to hamper and suppress Socialist publications. Though the people are pitiably unaware of it, our American postal bureaucracy is developing into an omnipresent capitalist spy; and, to the contemptible office of the spy, it is adding the ignoble functions of capitalist policeman. So the Government ownership of railways, under capitalism, may be converted into a military system that makes the striker a mutineer, subject to execution or imprisonment. Or take the extensions of Governmental control masquerading as social reforms—proposed by Lloyd George and Ramsay MacDonald in England, and by Theodore Roosevelt and his followers in America. We stupidly imagine these proposals to be an advance of democracy, and to make for the emancipation of labour. They are indeed but an amplified absolutism. They are no more Socialistic than the crown of the Russian Czar or the heart of the German Kaiser. They are measures put forth for the stronger entrenchment and securer development of capitalism. Their fundamental purpose is to so perfect the system of wage-slavery that the slave will be brought into harmony with capitalist perpetuity. The political servants of the financiers know what they are about; they know that their programmes, nominally Socialistic, have no other end than the prevention of Socialism. But the workers who support the politicians do not know. Alas! that they do not. *For the larger the power the workers put into the hands of the capitalist State, the more certainly do they provide for their own harder economic servitude, their surer political impotence, their deeper spiritual degradation.*

The rise of Syndicalism is a warning—a demonstration—that a merely political or Parliamentary Socialism will never possess the confidence of the workers, or become the organ of their emancipation.

Andre Tridon on Syndicalism

"The New Unionism." By Andre Tridon. H. B. Huebsch, New York. Paper, 25 cents; cloth, $1 net.

ANDRE TRIDON has given us quite the best handbook on Syndicalism that has been published in English or any other language.

He covers all countries and all men, and what he says is authoritative and correct. I am glad there is such a book to recommend and that it is sold at such a reasonable price.

Tridon is a Frenchman by birth, but has been a resident of New York ten years. He is a highly-educated man, a journalist and lecturer by profession, and one whose work is seen in the best magazines and newspapers of America and France. He was for a long time a member of the Socialist Party, and may be yet, for aught I know, although I should say that he has become a bit too revolutionary for the New York brethren.

His book is thoroughly up-to-date, even chronicling the recent recall of Haywood from the Executive Committee of the Socialist Party.

The author finds Syndicalism in all countries, but under a different name in each. He also finds that the orthodox Socialists in each country, following after the manner of the bourgeoisie, tell their faithful followers that no true American, Britisher, Italian, or whatever he may happen to be, will degrade himself with having anything to do with the vile foreign importation.

My own experience is that while the name Syndicalism seems to throw my Socialist friends into a kind of hysteria, the most of them now are inclined to assert that it is merely orthodox Marxianism masquerading under a new name.

I have no doubt that Syndicalism will be gradually and quite unconsciously absorbed as a theory by those whom we label Revolutionary Socialists and who really are such, while the Parliamentarians will either adopt a new name for themselves or they will force the Revolutionary Socialists to call themselves Syndicalists. Certainly there must develop a name to differentiate the two schools of thought.

It is quite customary among the Parliamentarians to classify Syndicalism as merely neo-Anarchism, but Tridon shows the error by quoting Edouard Berth :—

"Syndicalists admit that civilisation began, and had to begin, with some form of coercion, and, furthermore, that such coercion was beneficial and creative, and that if we look forward to a system of liberty without the tyranny of the employers or the tyranny of the State it is owing to the capitalist system of coercion which has disciplined mankind and made it gradually capable of rising to labour freely and voluntarily performed. Against this system of coercion, anarchism has constantly protested; it curses civilisation which requires so much effort and gives us so little happiness in return; we might say that this protest of the Anarchist merely voices the revolt of the lazy individual, of the primitive savage, of the mature man against a system which tried to break him to the discipline of labour. . . . Such a protest is purely negative, nay, reactionary. . . . For society is a co-ordination of efforts, not a juxtaposition of egos seeking mere enjoyment. . . . Anarchism is merely exaggerated bourgeoisism. An Anarchist is often a decadent bourgeois; his eagerness for a return to nature is very similar to the tired bourgeois craving for a fresh-air cure in the country."

Personally I am not so sure that Berth is right in making such a differentiation in ideals between Syndicalist and Anarchist. It is rather, I suggest, a fuller realisation on the part of the Syndicalist that in order to have accomplished any kind of a revolution we must have had the tyranny of capitalism to have welded the workers into a solidarity sufficient to give them strength to meet the bourgeoisie. Both Socialists and Anarchists, for instance, have always great reliance upon the strength of revolt in the unemployed. Now the Syndicalist ridicules the idea of an unemployed mob having any strength against an armed force of the State one-tenth its size. The Syndicalist looks to the employed folding arms, whereas Socialist and Anarchist look to the unemployed drawing arms, but the trouble is that the unemployed have no arms to draw.

Tridon gives an unusually good account of the personnel and the sketch of the lives of the leaders of the Syndicalist movement in France.

The book is particularly good in its early history of the I.W.W. To conclude, I again recommend it fully to anyone desiring a most compact and accurate compendium of the mightiest movement in the history of man.

Where Practice Does Not Make Perfect

"The Sentence of Silence." By Reginald Wright Kauffman. Latimer, London. 6s.

You always feel in reading Kauffman's books that here is a story by a man who is writing whereof he knows. Perhaps Kauffman has not had the experience, perhaps he has merely been an attentive newspaper reader, but, anyway, he gives you the illusion of reality, and that's all you can expect.

The story is of a boy, the son of a well-to-do merchant in a Pennsylvania village, who having caused a servant girl to fall into an interesting condition finds it is conducive to his own interest to suddenly depart for other pastures. He lands in New York, and while his adventures there are not particularly different from those falling to many an other young man with a well-developed instinct to indulge himself, they are noteworthy from the very frank way in which the author reveals them in detail.

Our hero Dan falls a victim to that form of disease which is now so much discussed in polite society, but which a couple of weeks ago was quite taboo. The disagreeableness of the disease itself was only exceeded by the mortifications he experienced in trying to raise money to liquidate the bill of the quack doctor to whom he resorted. He recovers, however.

Finally, Dan gives up the Broad White Way life and marries a girl whom he knew to have in theory quite as broad a way of looking at things sexual as he did himself—in a way, broader. But Dan believed that Judith was merely a theorist, so when after the marriage ceremony he found out that she had supposed that he of course knew she had actually eaten of the apple of knowledge—well, Dan, he was fearfully shocked. The story must be read to fully appreciate how deeply Dan was really shocked.

Nationalisation of Railways

Editorial, the *New Witness*, London.

WHAT has happened in France and Australia, where the lines have been owned by the State? The railwaymen know to their cost. They have been cowed, beaten, and humiliated, and made to accept conditions that they denounced as shameful, and just as to-day in England the Government workers at Deptford Yard, and in the Pimlico Clothing Factory, are sweated, so to-day the State employed railwaymen of France and Australia are underpaid and overworked. In France they were shot. In Australia they were disenfranchised. Why should the State in England be more considerate? It is infinitely less democratic than in either of the other countries, and its officials are infinitely more hostile to Labour.

Again, let us say that it is no answer to this condition to refer us to an England not yet existing, when the State shall be instantly responsive to the popular will, when the officials will all have been born again, when equality is enthroned, and when the electorate controls Parliament. Such an England may one day exist, and then nationalisation will be a discussable proposition But in the world we live in to-day the railwaymen would find the little finger of the State thicker than the loins of the companies; and let them be perfectly sure that the State could count on an amount of public sympathy and support in the ruthless suppression of a national strike such as no railway company ever elicited. The railwaymen, at any rate, have nothing to gain by nationalisation. The weapon of the strike, which they can use in difficulty against the companies, would be almost impossible if directed against the community; and as for the other weapon they have in the past relied upon to secure fair conditions, that of Parliamentary representation, that is so generally discredited as scarcely to require any comment whatever.

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